

Landlords: How to enforce your smokefree policy

Congrats! Your new smokefree policy will prevent costly damage to your property and protect tenants' health.

Enforcing your policy shouldn't be hard. Surveys show 85 percent of Montana renters want smokefree housing and, because of this, smokefree policies are largely self-enforcing. But there are times when you may have to step in and enforce the policy.

Follow these tips to make sure tenants know and follow the rules.

Prevent problems by:

- Spelling out your policy. Include it in the lease. Explain what happens if people break the rules.
- Posting "no smoking" signs throughout the property.
- Providing fact sheets on why smokefree housing matters.
- Posting Montana Quitline information for tenants who want to quit smoking.

Respond to complaints promptly:

- Encourage staff and tenants to notify management of smoking violations.
- Document all complaints and signs of smoking on the property. This includes odor, cigarette butts and property damage caused by smoking. Note where and when the offenses occurred.
- Contact tenants who break the rules. Visit them in person, give them a call or send a note.
- Spell out what happens next. Many landlords start with a verbal warning, followed by a written letter on the second offense, and a final letter on a third offense. This is followed by a lease-termination notice. See sample letters on the other side of this handout.

Resources:

- Get *FREE* lease policies, fact sheets, no smoking signs and Quitline materials from the [Montana Tobacco Use Prevention Program](#) or call (406) 444-7896.
- Contact your [local Tobacco Prevention Specialist](#) or [Tribal Tobacco Prevention Specialist](#) for further assistance.

Remember:

Your policy protects your property and tenants' health. Smokers are welcome, but smoking is not. Following the rules shows respect for other tenants and their well-being.

Sample letter: First violation

Dear **TENANT NAME**,

I'm writing to remind you smoking is not allowed in our building and other posted areas on the property **(or the entire property, if this is your policy)**. This is your first warning: I've received a complaint and am aware you're in violation of this policy.

I've attached a copy of the policy for you to read. Be aware that not following the policy will result in the termination of your lease.

If you have questions, please give me a call at **PHONE NUMBER**.

YOUR NAME

Sample letter: Final warning

Dear **TENANT NAME**,

Please be advised you are in violation of your lease agreement. Per the lease, smoking is prohibited **(in your unit, on the property)**. I've included a copy of your lease with this policy highlighted. I am aware that you have again violated this agreement.

You, your family members and all your visitors must abide by this policy from this point forward.

Failure to comply will result in termination of your lease.

If you have questions, please contact me at **PHONE NUMBER**.

YOUR NAME